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SPELLING MATCHES.

Many people were perhaps surprised the other day to read that a third annual intercounty spelling match had been held between school children in Madison and Onondaga counties, New York. It would be interesting to know if this is merely a unique instance, or if there is a tendency to revive the old time spelling match, which has been regarded as obsolete.

The old fashioned spelling contest seemed to be part of an earlier social life, where people were thrown more on their own resources for diversion. Also they were not averse to some little mental exercise. There were contests in repeating literary and Biblical quotations and in the writing of verses. All kinds of information were worked into games.

Nowadays the world is more full of amusements. Most people like to sit in an opera chair and see other people perform while their minds lie idle and inert.

The displays of spelling ability that one would formerly see at any cross roads spelling match would seem almost unbelievable today. The English language is so purely illogical in its forms, that it requires no little mental effort to establish a correct orthography. One can not fix the correct form in one's mind by any analogies, for the exceptions are more numerous than the rules.

Probably good spelling ability depends somewhat on the same gifts that create habits of mental accuracy. The quiet monkey looking person, who never attracts attention in the class room or social life, is apt to have the mind that works methodically and regularly in one groove. This kind of mind probably makes the best speller.

Good spelling is a valuable habit and gives an impression of an accurate mind, and familiarity with the world of books and business. It would be well if the old time spelling contests could be revived both as sporting contests after the old manner, and in tests between different schools, towns and counties, as in the contest in New York state referred to above.

Who says the United States is not ready for war when two of our statesmen gathered for the preparedness convention engage in fist-cuffs on the street?

Judging by some eloquent advertisement in the magazines, the true test of culture is not knowledge of literature or history, but the habit of smoking certain brands of cigarettes.

While the army and navy may lack shells and other ammunition, it is believed that the farmers would rush to the defense of the government with their pitchforks.

"Courtesy First" is the slogan of the Wolverine Automobile Club of Detroit, and it burns up no more gasoline and punctures no more tires.

A few months ago we noted an enormous amount of newspaper gab about "America absorbing the commerce of the world." Just gab.

The people with non-taxable incomes are all convinced that the Supreme Court's decision in favor of the income tax is good law.

All you have to do to run a successful juvenile publication is to print a lot of stories showing how much smarter boys are than men.

The north went to war to abolish slavery, but even now in every northern paper you read about ball players being bought and sold.

The Sunday dinner should be eaten with a cheerful heart, and without forebodings of the salt fish lay-outs that will pay for it.

In some places they are trying to deprive citizens of the cherished right of communicating grip and other diseases by spitting.

Under stress of strong emotion a woman can smile, laugh and cry all in the same breath. A man cusses and grunts.

Patent medicine labels now have to tell the truth. It would be fatal to their patients if doctors had to.

There is an insistent demand from the sporting fraternity for a permanent open season on Mexicans.

A college may not acquire a reputation from the intellectual quality of its graduates, but the fame of a good baseball team can't be hid.

Stingaree

By E. W. HORNUNG,
Author of "Raffles"Motion Pictures by
Kalem CompanyRead the Story and
Then See the Pictures

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"TO THE VILE DUST."

(Continued from Monday.)

It was Howie who came over with the steaming pannikin and watched Vanhelmet as he slipped and smacked his lips, while Stingaree at his distance watched them both. The pannikin was accompanied by a tin plate full of cold mutton and a wedge of baking powder bread, which between them prevented the ravening man from observing how closely he was himself observed as he assuaged his pangs. There was, however, something in the nature of a muttered altercation between the bush-rangers when Howie was sent back for more of everything. Vanhelmet put it down to his own demands and felt that Stingaree was his friend when it was he who brought the fresh supplies.

"Eat away," said Stingaree, sending him and producing pipe and tobacco. "It's rough fare, but there's plenty of it."

"I won't ask you for no more," replied Vanhelmet, paving the way for his escape.

"Oh, yes, you will," said Stingaree. "You're going to camp with us for the next few days, my friend!"

"Why am I?" cried Vanhelmet, aghast at the quiet statement, which it never occurred to him to gainsay.

"Because the way out of this takes some finding, and what's the use of escaping an unpleasant death one day if you go and die it the next? That's one reason," said Stingaree, "but there's another."

"The reason is that, now you're here, you don't go till I choose."

"That's real kind of you," said Vanhelmet. "I don't feel like running no more risks till I'm obliged. My nerves are shook. And if a born back blocker may make so bold, it's a fair old treat to see a new chum camping out for the fun of it."

"Who told you I was a new chum?" asked Stingaree sharply. "Ah, I remember," he added, nodding; "you heard of me lower down the road."

Vanhelmet grinned from ear to ear. "I'd have known it without that," said he. "What real bushmen would bluff their billy on a spirit lamp when there's wood and to spare for a campfire on all sides of 'em?"

Now, Vanhelmet clearly perceived the superiority of smokeless spirit lamp to telltale fire for those in hiding, so he chuckled contentedly over this thrust, which was taken in such excellent part by Stingaree as to prove him a victim to the desired illusion. It was the cleverest touch that Vanhelmet had yet achieved. And he had the wit neither to blunt his point by rubbing it in nor to recall attention to it by subtle protestation of his pretended persuasion. But once or twice before sundown he permitted himself to ask natural questions concerning the old country and to indulge in those genial gibes which the Englishman in the bush learns to expect from the indigenous buffoon.

In the night Vanhelmet was less easy. He had to sleep in Howie's tent, but it was some hours before he slept at all, for Howie would remain out side, and Vanhelmet longed to hear him snore. At last the rabbitier fell into a doze, and when he awoke the suspicious music filled the tent. He listened on one elbow, peering till the darkness turned less dense, and there lay Howie across the opening of the tent. Vanhelmet reached for his thin elastic sided bushman's boots, and his hands trembled as he drew them on. He stepped over Howie's form without mistake, and the ignoble strains droned on behind him.

Before departure Vanhelmet wished to peep into the other tent, but its open end was completely covered in for the night, and prudence forbade him to meddle with his hands.

On foot he went, indeed on tiptoe till the edge of the trees was reached with out adventure, and he turned to look his last upon the two tents shimmering in the starlight. As he turned again, satisfied that the one was still shut and that Howie still lay across the opening of the other, a firm hand took Vanhelmet by either shoulder; otherwise he had leaped into the air for it was Stingaree, who had stooped from behind a bush as from another planet, so suddenly that Vanhelmet nearly gasped his dreadful name.

"I couldn't sleep! I couldn't sleep!" he cried out.

"No more could I," said Stingaree. "So I was going for a stroll. That was all, I swear. Mr.—Mr.—I don't know your name!"

"Quite sure!" said Stingaree. "My oath! How should I?"

Stingaree peered into the great face to which the teeth were chattering and from which all trace of color had flown.

"I shouldn't eat you for knowing who I am," said Stingaree. "Honesty is still a wise policy in certain circumstances."

"I know nothing about you, and care less," retorted Vanhelmet sullenly, though the perspiration was welling out of him. "I come for a stroll because I couldn't sleep, and I can't see what all this business is about."

Stingaree dropped his hands.

"Do you want to sleep?"

"My blessed oath!"

"Then come to my tent, and I'll give you a snorter that may make you."

The snorter was poured out of a gully jar, under Vanhelmet's nose, by

the light of a candle which he held himself. Yet he smiled it fortively before trying it with his lips and denied himself a gulp till he was reassured. But soon the empty pannikin was held out for more. And it was the starlies hour before dawn when Vanhelmet tripped over Howie's legs and took a contented header into the corner from which he had made his stealthy escape.

The tent was tropical when he awoke, but Stingaree was still at his breakfast outside in the shade. He pointed to a bucket and a piece of soap behind the tent, and Vanhelmet engaged in obedient ablutions before sitting down to his pannikin, his slice of damper and his portion of a tin of sardines.

"Sorry there's no meat for you," said Stingaree. "My mate's gone to Ivanhoe for fresh supplies."

The rabbitier looked at a pair of dilapidated worsted socks and at one protruding toe. He was not sure whether he had gone to bed for the second time in these or in his boots. Certainly he had missed the latter on his second awakening, but had not deemed it expedient to make inquiries. And now he merely observed that he wondered where he could have left them.

"On your feet," said Stingaree. "My mate has made so bold as to borrow them for the day."

"He's welcome to them, I'm sure," said Vanhelmet, with a sickly smile.

"I was sure you would say so," rejoined Stingaree. "His own are reduced to uppers and half a heel apiece, but he hopes to get them soled in Ivanhoe while he waits."

"So he's gone to Ivanhoe, has he?"

"He's been gone three hours."

"Surely it's a long trip?"

"Yes. We shall have to make the most of each other till sundown," said Stingaree, gazing through his glass upon Vanhelmet's perplexity.

And with a cavalier nod to clinch the last word on the subject the bush-ranger gave himself over to his camp chair, his pipe and his inexhaustible Australasian. As for Vanhelmet, he eventually returned to the tent in which he had spent the night, and there he remained a good many minutes, though it was now the forenoon and the heat under canvas past endurance. But when at length he emerged, as from a bath, Stingaree, seated behind his Australasian in the lee of the other tent, took so little notice of him that Vanhelmet crept back to have one more look at the thing which he had found in the old valise which served Howie for a pillow. And the thing was a very workmanlike revolver, with a heavy cartridge in each of its six chambers.

Vanhelmet handled it with trembling fingers and packed it afresh in the pocket where it least affected his personal contour, its angles softened by a big bandanna handkerchief, only to take it out yet again with a resolution that opened a fresh sluice in every pore. The blanket that had been lent to him and Howie's blanket both lay at his feet. He threw one over either arm and with the revolver thus effectually concealed, he grasped for action with finger on trigger, sallied forth at last.

Stingaree was still seated in the narrowing shade of his own tent. Vanhelmet was within five paces of him before he looked up so very quickly, with such a rapid adjustment of the terrible eyeglass that Vanhelmet stood stock still, and the butt of his hidden weapon turned colder than ever in his melting hand.

"Why, what have you got there?" cried Stingaree. "And what's the mat-

ter with you, man?" he added, as Vanhelmet stood shaking in his socks.

"Only his blankets, to camp on," the fellow answered, hoarsely. "You advised me to help myself, you know."

"Quite right, so I did; but you're as white as the tent—you tremble like a leaf. What's wrong?"

"My head," replied Vanhelmet, in a whine. "It's going round and round, either from what I had in the night or lying too long in the hot tent, or one on top of the other. I thought I'd camp for a bit in the shade."

"I should," said Stingaree, and buried himself in his paper with undisguised contempt.

Vanhelmet came a step nearer. Stingaree did not look up again. The revolver was leveled under one trailing blanket. But the trigger was never pulled. Vanhelmet feared to miss even at arm's length, so paused was his hand, so dim his eye. He was a bush-ranger and an outlaw; he deserved to die or to be taken, and Vanhelmet's only regret was that he had neither taken nor shot him at their last interview.

"Come and eat," shouted Stingaree at last, and Vanhelmet trailed the blankets over his left arm, his right thrust into his pocket, which bulged with a red bandanna handkerchief.

"Sorry it's sardines again," the bush-ranger went on, "but we shall make

up with a square feed tonight if my mate gets back by dark; if he doesn't we may have to tighten our belts till morning. Fortunately there's plenty to drink. Have some whisky in your tea?"

Vanhelmet nodded, and with an eye on the bush-ranger, who was once more stooping over his beloved Australasian, helped himself enormously from the gallon jar.

"And now for a siesta," yawned Stingaree, rising and stretching himself after the meal.

"Hear, hear!" croaked Vanhelmet, his great face flushed, his bloodshot eyes on fire.

"I shall camp on the shady side of my tent."

"And I'll do ditto at the other."

"So long, then."

"So long."

"Sweet repose to you!"

"Same to you," rasped Vanhelmet, and went off cursing and chuckling in his heart by turns.

(To be continued)

Read the "Stingaree" stories in the Public Ledger every week previous to the film showing at the Washington Theater every Thursday night.

RIDING TEXAS OF WOLVES

Professional Hunters Are Reaping Big Harvest Under New Scalp Bounty Law.

Austin, Tex.—Although many thousands of wolves have been killed since the new scalp bounty law went into effect last June, there is still enough money in the fund appropriated for the purpose to last several more months.

Many professional hunters are making considerable money killing wolves, both of the lobo and coyote varieties. An investigation of the predatory wild animals pest was made by representatives of the United States department of agriculture, and ranchmen and farmers have been provided with a formula for killing, poisoning and hunting wolves, as follows:

"The stock killed by wolves is mainly cattle. Calves and yearlings are generally selected, but if these are not available, cows and even full-grown steers are killed. They are usually attacked from behind and literally eaten alive. Occasionally an animal will escape the wolf with a great piece torn out of its ham, while the wolf goes on to catch and kill another."

U. S. GETS WORK FOR MANY

Secretary Wilson of Department of Labor Pleased With His Employment Bureau.

Washington.—The federal employment bureau is a success, declares Secretary of Labor Wilson.

"We started in a small way," he said today, "but the work has progressed far enough to show the possibilities of this line of endeavor. We have furnished jobs to about 33 percent of those who have applied for work. Our aim is to link together in one big chain all the state and municipal agencies for the unemployed. Some progress has been made along this line already."

"The bureau does not merely place unskilled labor; it has applications from many men of training in various industrial fields and has found employment for a large number. We are constantly receiving applications for jobs and from the employers orders to fill their employment wants. We act precisely as a clearing house for labor."

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The twins weigh 37 and 38 pounds respectively, and their safe transit home cost the trifling sum of only 23 and 24 cents, on each, a total of 47 cents.

A method by which all liquids can be solidified into tablet form has been invented by a French chemist.

The hump of the camel is regarded as a choice morsel of food in Arabia.

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Kidney trouble is dangerous and often fatal.

Don't experiment with something new and untried.

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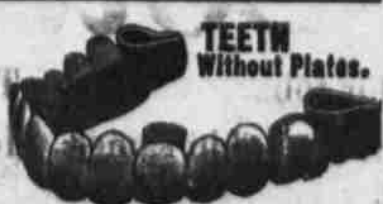
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